

# There's a run on the mint for 1984 coin sets

By Roger Boye

**A**s expected, the United States Mint is receiving thousands of orders this month for sets of uncirculated coins, the first such government offering in three years.

The 1984 version includes 10 coins, one of each denomination [cent through half dollar] from the Philadelphia and Denver mints. Officials are charging \$7 for \$1.82 worth of "hard money," a reduction from 1981 when hobbyists paid \$11 for coins with a face value of \$4.82 [that set also contained three Susan B. Anthony dollars, which no longer are produced].

New this year are two medals made from Lincoln cent slugs, bearing a large "P" or "D" for the two government mints. The medals will be packaged with the coins in soft-plastic sheets.

Workers began accepting orders in early September and will continue to do so until at least Nov. 1.

Sets of most modern-day coins have poor investment potential, but many collectors still buy them as a convenient way to acquire pristine samples of the current year's money. Coins in uncirculated sets are regular "business strikes," unlike proof specimens that are made with specially prepared slugs and dies.

To order an uncirculated set, send a check or money order for \$7 to the U.S. Mint, 55 Mint St., San Francisco, Calif. 94175. There is no order limit and the government promises to mail all sets by Dec. 31.

● Let's pretend you have ordered several "choice uncirculated" silver dollars from a dealer. After six weeks, you finally get your merchandise in the mail, but the coins are scratched and even discolored.

How do you complain and get results? Scott A. Travers has many useful tips in his new book, appropriately called "The Coin Collector's Survival Manual."

Travers, a New York dealer, discusses the coin business from an insider's point-of-view. Some of his suggestions are little more than common sense, but the book still pulls together a wealth of practical advice on negotiating with dealers, detecting counterfeits and preserving a collection.

If you are the victim of a possible mail-order fraud, for example, Travers says you should complain to the publication that ran the dealer's advertisement, among other things.

Travers' 198-page manual, recently named Book of the Year by the Numismatic Literary Guild, is sold in some coin stores or can be ordered from Arco Publishing Inc., 215 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10003. The cloth-back edition is \$14.95 and the paperback, \$9.95.